MERRY FROLICKS,
OR THE
COMICAL CHEATS
OF
WALPO,
A Notorious Pick-Pocket,
And the Merry Pranks of
ROGER the CLOWN.

inted and Sold in Aldermary Church-Yard, Bow-Lane, London.

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The Famous History of SWALPO the Pick-Pocket.

CHAP. I.

Of his stealing a Piece of Gold out of a Countryman's Mouth.

SWALPO dressed himself like a countryman, with a pair of dirty boots, and a whip in his hand; and going to Bartholomew Fair, he met with no prize worth naming; but walking out of the fair, he met a countryman, whom

he accosted thus, Honest friend, have a care of your pockets, you are now going among pickpockets, rogues, and thieves. I am glad they have not picked the teeth out of my head; for let one take never so much care, they will be sure of your money; I am sure the devil helps them. —I defy all the devils in hell, says the countryman, to rob me of any thing of value; I have a broad-piece, that I'll secure; so clapping it in his mouth, he went confidently into the fair. Swaipo desired to know no more than where it was; he gives a sign to a hopeful boy of his, and telling out some sixpences and groats, told him what he must do. The boy immediately runs, and fell down just before the countryman, and scattering the money, starts up and roars like a bedlam, crying. He was undone, he must run away from his apprenticeship, his master was such a furious fellow, he would certainly kill him. The countryman, with other people, gathered about, helping the boy to take up the money. Says one of them have you got all? — Yes, all the silver, said the boy, but their was a broad piece of gold, which I was carrying to

my maſter, for a token ſent out of the country; and I, like a fool, muſt come through this unlucky place to loſe it; I ſhall be killed, what will become of me? Swalpo then coming up, tells ſome of the by-ſtanders He obſerved that country fellow there to ſtoop and put ſomething in his mouth; whereupon they flew on him, and one of them wreſting open his chaps, made him ſpit out the gold, and ſome blood along with it; endeavouring to ſpeak for himſelf, they kicked, punched, and toſſed him about, calling out for pump and privy; ſo that he was obliged to aſk for mercy, and thought himſelf happier than the Grand Turk when he had got out of their clutches. The boy in the interim ſlipt amo g the crowd, and goes to Swalpo with the gold, where he uſed to find him.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

Swalpo's Trick upon a Gentleman at the Exchange.

SWALPO and his boy having changed cloaths, and going into the crowd, heard the people talk of a country fellow having got into a house, and sent for some great persons, who knew him and his master, a Knight of great estate in the North, who was come to town upon business. Swalpo knew the gentleman, and expecting to find him at the Exchange, posted thither, and picked his pocket of all his money except one guinea, which he left him for a nest egg. The Knight going to the tavern, laughed heartily when his tenant told him he had been robbed at the fair, but calling for the reckoning, he found that he had been robbed too. — 'Sblood, says the Knight, let us make our escape out of this roguish place. Slidikins, Sir, says the tenant, they will steal our very guts.

CHAP. III.

Swalpo robs a Knight ſeveral Times, and then goes with him to a Tavern.

THE Knight lined his pockets again with gold, and went next day to the Exchange, but notwithſtanding his care was robbed again. The Knight admired how it was poſſible for the wit of man to rob one who had been appriſed, and was on his guard; at laſt he obſerved Swalpo to ſtand near him, and recollecting he had ſeen him near him ſeveral times before, began to ſuſpect him; and coming up to him, told him, he believed he was the man who had picked his pocket, and robbed him very often; but he having a good eſtate, he did not regard the loſs, and if he would ſhew him by what means he had ſerved him ſo, he would not only forgive him, but treat him well, upon his honour. Sir, your word is ſufficient ſaid Swalpo, I am the man, I will wait on your Worſhip to the tavern, and there ſhew you my art more freely. As they were going together, the Knight told him

he resolved to make a frolick of it, and would therefore send for some of his acquaintance, but would take care that he should come to no hurt. Sir, I know you to be a gentleman, says Swalpo, and I trust I shall be safe.

CHAP. IV.

Swalpo, while in a Tavern steals a Watch from a Gentleman in Moorfields.

WHEN the gentlemen came, at Swalpo's request Roger was sent for, to make up the frolick. When he came, it was good sport to see the clown bow to the ground. What would you give said the Knight, if you could see your gold again? — Aye, said Roger, I would I could; but since it was not safe in my mouth, where should I put it? Blood! I had rather see the rogue, I'd make jelly of his bones. — There he is, quoth the Knight, and there is your broad piece. Roger seeing how things went, drank to Swalpo, and shook hands with him.

One of the gentlemen pulling out a watch, another said, He wondered how it

was poſſible for them to pick a watch out of a fob, it muſt certainly be careleſſneſs. No, ſaid Swalpo, if the gentleman will take a turn or two in Moorefields, I will wager a guinea I have the watch before he comes back, and never ſtir out of the room.—Done, ſaid the gentleman.—Done ſaid Roger, ſiggers, he'll ſteal your liver if he ſays it. However, the gentleman went out with his watch, and was very careful not to let any one come within arm's length of him, thinking the devil muſt help them, if any could rob him at that diſtance.—When it was almoſt time he ſhould return, a boy came ſoftly behind him, and blowed from a quill ſome lice upon the gentleman's cloaths, and then ran by him, but not ſo near as to give ſuſpicion; as the boy paſſed him, he looked over his ſhoulder, and told the gentleman, His back was covered with huge lice; which he perceiving, and loathing the ſight, ſaid, Good boy, take them off, and I will give you a ſhilling.—The boy did ſo, picking the lice off his coat, and the watch out of his fob, took the reward, and ran to the tavern with the watch to his maſter. The gentleman

returned, wondering how he came by theſe vermid. As he came into the room Swalpo aſked him, What o'Cleck it was by his watch? when thinking to pull it

out, he was amazed to find it gone, — Swalpo pulled it out, aſking if that was it?—The gentleman ſtood as mute as a fiſh. Roger laughed heartily. But the gentleman, full of amazement, ſaid, Certainly he muſt have the aſſiſtance of the devil. Says Swalpo, did a boy pick you clean?—Yes, ſaid the Gentleman.——O, ſaid Swalpo, that was the devil.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

Swalpo ſteals a fine Coat from a Nobleman's Back.

THE whole company being greatly pleaſed with the ingenuity of the laſt trick, Swalpo ſaid, Alas, gentlemen, this trick is not worth talking of, ſuch as this we ſend our boys about. There is now a nobleman going by the door, I will wager a guinea I ſteal his coat from off his back before all his followers. The gentlemen ſtaked each their guinea, and Roger and Swalpo covered them as before. Then out went Swalpo, and dogged the nobleman to a tavern; as ſoon as he was conducted up ſtairs, Swalpo went to the bar-keeper, and deſired to borrow an apron, for the nobleman his maſter would be ſerved only by himſelf; he ran ſo nimbly, and did every thing ſo handily, that the company were mightily pleaſed with him, taking him for a ſervant in the houſe; he never came into the room but he paſſed ſome merry jeſt, and when they ſpoke to him his anſwers pleaſed them all mightily. When he found he had got

them in a good humour, he reſolved not to triſle; whereſore as he waited behind the Lord's chair, he took out his knife, and made a ſlit in the back ſeam of his coat, and ran down ſtairs for more liquor; when he returned, as ſoon as he came near his Lordſhip he ſtarted back, aſking what taylor made that coat, which would

not hold one day? Some of the company, riſing, and ſeeing the flaſh, ſaid, the taylor had affronted my Lord. Said he, I paid him his price, and he ſhall hear of it. My Lord, ſaid Swalpo, it is only the end of a thread has ſlipt, ſuch things often happen; there is a fine-drawer of my acquaintance lives in the next ſtreet, if your Lordſhip pleaſes, I will convey it under my maſter's cloak, and return immedi-

ately. The nobleman borrows a great coat of one of the company, and give it unto Swalpo, who immediately came down to the vintner, and told him what had happened, and to prevent its being ſeen in the ſtreets, deſires him to lend him his cloak. The vintner ſhewed him where it was, which Swalpo put on, as alſo a hat which hung on the next pin; thus he walks off with them, and coming to the tavern at which the gentleman waited, he went into a room, changed his cloaths, then returns and ſalutes them. Says one, Inſtead of a coat you come in a cloak; ſo then opening the cloak, they were ſurpriſed to ſee the rich embroidered coat. Then Roger laughed heartily; but when he told them how he had performed it, they all burſt into a great laughter.

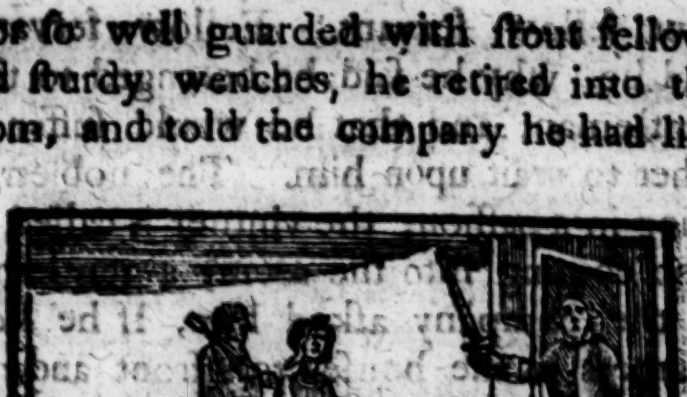
CHAP. VI.

The Nobleman and his Company quarrel with the Vintner and his Servants.

MY Lord and his company grew out of patience, and the people of the houſe ſent up a drawer. Do you call, gentlemen? ſaid he. Says one, Send up

your fellow ſervant. Fellow ſervant! ſaid he, why he ſaid he belonged to that gentleman, and that he would ſuffer no other to wait upon him. The nobleman being in a paſſion, the vintner is called up who coming into the room, a gentleman of the company aſked him, If he kept ſharpers in the houſe, to affront and rob them? Nay, ſays the vintner, who was a very paſſionate man, do you bring ſharpers to rob me? I am ſure I have loſt a new cloak and hat; and for ought I do know, you may be ſharpers yourſelves; but I expect to be ſatisfied. Immediately one drew upon him, but he run down ſtairs, and calls all the houſe together, bidding them get what they could, and not ſuffer one to come down ſtairs, and ſnatching his ſword, ran up ſtairs again, the ſervants arming themſelves with ſpits, forks, &c. followed him. The uproar was very great, and my lord coming down firſt, made a paſs at the vintner, but was put by with a fire-ſhovel, which was in one of the drawer's hands, narrowly eſcaping being thruſt in the guts with a long ſpit which Margery the cook-maid puſhed at him; ſo that my Lord ſeeing the

doors so well guarded with stout fellows and sturdy wenches, he retired into the room, and told the company he had like



to be killed by a wench with a spit. So they seeing it not safe, shut the door, and began to consult what to do.

CHAP. VII.

The above Quarrel amicably adjusted.

THE gentlemen hearing of the quarrel between my Lord and the Vintner, immediately sent word they had took the rogue, and would, if he desired it, wait upon him. Away went the landlord, and coming to the house, he found it in a ter-

rible uproar, the ſervants all knowing him let him go up, where he told his brother vintner, the rogue was taken at his houſe. Immediately a ceſſation of arms was proclaimed. The nobleman and his friends went with the vintner, and after ſome compliments they ſeated themſelves, and Swalpo delivered the things to them, giving an account of his expedition; but all the gentlemen concluding that honeſty is the beſt policy, told Swalpo it was a pity ſo much wit ſhould be ſo ill employed. He anſwered, He was ſenſible of what they ſaid, gave them hearty thanks, and confeſſed he was weary of the ſad company he was forced to keep. Well, ſays the Nobleman, I have a place of a hundred a year, if that will ſerve you, you ſhall have it: and the frolick being over, he went with the Nobleman, proved an honeſt man, married to great advantage, and lived in high eſteem.

CHAP.

CHAP. VIII.

His Dexterity of picking Pockets, after Notice given.

THE nobleman hearing of his dexterity in taking watches, desired him to do it. Swalpo bid the nobleman be on his guard; so he walked up and down the room, as did also Swalpo. While the Lord was disputing warmly with some of the company, Swalpo, who watched his opportunity, gently tickles the Lord with a feather under the right ear; which made him on a sudden quit the watch to scratch himself, and clapping his hand to

his fob again, and found it gone. He looks behind him, and ſees Swalpo with the watch in his hand, bowing, which occaſioned much laughter.

CHAP. IX.

He ſteals a Silver Tankard, to the Wonder of the Company.

ONE of the gentlemen looking out ſaw in an oppoſite window a large tankard, and aſked Swalpo if he could ſteal it. He ſaid he would try, if Roger went with him. Roger hearing this was glad, thinking to become a ſecond Swalpo. When they went out he bid him go to a poulterer and buy a couple of pheaſants, and come to ſuch a tavern. When Roger returned, he found Swalpo with an apron like a drawer. Swalpo takes the pheaſants, and goes where the tankard was, being certain the maſter was not within, becauſe he had ſent his boy to watch him: He deſired to ſpeak with the merchant's Lady, and tells her the gentleman, naming her huſband, was in

a tavern near the Exchange, and happening to be in company with a goldſmith, he had perſuaded him to exchange his old-faſhioned tankard, and as two gentlemen were to dine with him, he would ſend home the tankard by the time the pheaſants were roaſted. — Pray heaven

bleſs my husband, ſaid ſhe, and continue the good temper he is in. I have talked to him theſe ſeven years abo: this lumbering thing, and he only bantered me about it. Heaven keep me, I will have as good a one as my lady at St. James's, or I'll ſend it back again. Full of joy ſhe received the pheaſants, and delivered the tankard to Swalpo.

When the merchant came home, his lady met him, as well dreſſed and as well

pleaſed as a young bride. She flew about his neck, and kiſſed him, and gave him an hundred thanks for his tankard and pheaſants. And pray honey, where are the gentlemen? And pray hoey where are you wife? Hey dey! my wife is diſtracted! It was ſome time before they could underſtand each other; and then inſtead of dining ſhe went to her chamber to cry, and he to Lombard ſtreet to ſtop the tankard.

CHAP. X.

Roger ſets up for a Wit, and brings off the Pheaſants to the Tavern; where the Lord and his Maſter were.

ROGER ſeeing ſo much ingennity, attempted the ſame himſelf. Away he goes, dreſſed like a porter, to the merchant's lady, ſaying, her husband was at the Swan tavern, Cornhill, with the man who ſtole, and the goldſmith who ſtopt the tankard, and begged ſhe would come and ſee him before he was ſent to Newgate.—Yes, marry, will I, and ſend him

to Tyburn. But, ſays Roger, my maſter is hungry, and would have you ſend the pheaſants, that the rogue may ſee him and you eat them. Roger received them, and the lady having her head to dreſs, ſaid ſhe knew the way, and would be there ſoon. Roger brings the pheaſants to my Lord and his company, which cauſed much laughter.

The lady going to the Swan, enquires for her huſband; and was told he had not been there that day. This anſwer ſtruck her dumb, and they ſeeing her in great confuſion, thought ſhe was a whore, who had miſſed her ſpark, and began to banter her. Then ſhe telling a lame ſtory of her being robbed of her pheaſants and the tankard, they fell a laughing. Being of a high ſpirit ſhe raged exceedingly, but could not help herſelf, ſo poſted home to vent her ſorrow, where ſhe found her huſband, and told him the ſtory.—Hey, hey, ſays he, what twice in one day! they will not leave me worth a groat. I would give an hundred pounds to ſee them hanged.

While they were fretting and talking thus, the maſter of the tavern where my

Lord was, came in and told them, the two rogues who had cheated them were in his houſe in ſafe cuſtody, and if they were pleaſed but to walk over they ſhould ſee them, and drink out of their own tankard, and eat part of the pheaſants.—Fearing no danger, they joyfully went over to his neighbour's, where the gentry were juſt going to dine; but they wondered what was the meaning of the rogues ſitting at the table with them, and eſpecially Roger, whom they had ſet at the head of the table, for the jeſt's ſake, wore his hat on, and all the reſt uncovered. The Lady notwithſtanding all this, was a little uneaſy at the ſight of them, who had put ſo great an affront and abuſe on her; but ſhe was wonderfully ſatisfied, when one of the company told her all, from the beginning to the end. Never was dinner more merrily eaten: but when they came Roger was deſired to carve; he willingly undertook it, and afforded the company much diverſion with his aukwardneſs.

CHAP.

CHAP. XI.

Roger outwits Swalpo; but Swalpo even with him.

THE dinner was rich, the wine coſtly, and the whole conducted with the greateſt mirth. At laſt one of the company told Roger he was vaſtly improved ſince Bartholomew Fair. — Aye, ſays he, Swalpo cannot cheat me of my broad piece now. — What! ſays Swalpo, do you challenge your maſter? — Well, Roger, to ſhew the Lady ſome ſport, let us conclude with a droll; — your broad piece is mine in a quarter of an hour. — All the craft is in the catching of it, ſays Roger, ſo do your worſt. — With that he jumps from the table, and runs into the next room, where he pulls off his breeches and then returned in a ſort of triumph, carrying them on the top of a long oaken [illegible] ſo that Swalpo could not reach [illegible] gentry laughed at the ſight of them. The [illegible]ned his back, they ſaw but when he tu[illegible]

how his ſhirted was painted with divers colours, which he did to renew their laughter. In the mean time Swalpo bids his boy fetch him ſome cow-itch, mixed with a little ſhred horſe-hair. After they had ſhewn many antick poſtures, Swalpo pretending to make for his breeches, and

Roger avoiding him, Swalpo by a ſig. cauſed his boy to put ſome cow-itch into his ſhirt; then pretending to be vanquiſhed, he ſat down. Roger keeping the field, walked up and down, ſtrutting like a crow in a gutter, and waving his breeches about his head, proclaimed the victory.

By this time the oin'ment began to work on his buttocks, which ſet him to rubbing and ſcratching, and the more he

CHAP. XI.

Roger outwits Swalpo; but Swalpo is even with him.

THE dinner was rich, the wine costly, and the whole conducted with the greatest mirth. At last one of the company told Roger he was vastly improved since Bartholomew Fair. — Aye, says he, Swalpo cannot cheat me of my broad piece now. — What! says Swalpo, do you challenge your master? — Well, Roger, to shew the Lady some sport, let us conclude with a droll; — your broad piece is mine in a quarter of an hour. — All the craft is in the catching of it, says Roger, so do your worst. — With that he jumps from the table, and runs into the next room, where he pulls off his breeches and then returned in a sort of triumph, carrying them on the top of a long oaken [illegible] so that Swalpo could not reach [illegible] gentry laughed at the sight [illegible] them. The [illegible]ed his back, they saw but when he turned

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By this time the oin'ment began to work on his buttocks, which ſet him to rubbing and ſcratching, and the more he

scratched, the more he might. Roger made a thousand wry faces, and perceiving by the smart, and the great laughter of the company, that he must quit the field, he run into the next room, where he cut off the flap of his shirt, and put on his breeches, returned again to the company, and continuing to scratch a good while after, he told them, He deserved what he had gotten, and for the time to come would remember these proverbs, viz.

He that looks too high,
Gets a chip in his eye.
Let not a shoemaker go beyond his last.

At which Swalpo and the gentlemen laughed heartily; after which my Lord discharged the reckoning, and every one departed to his own habitation.

FINIS.